

REMARKS

Claims 1-20, 69, 71-79, 88-95, 107-141 and 144 are presented for consideration, with Claims 1, 10-12, 69, 71-73, 88, 107, 122-124, 141 and 144 being independent.

Initially, Applicant notes with appreciation that Claims 1-20, 69, 107-141 and 144 are allowed. In addition, dependent Claims 71-77 and 88-95 were indicated as containing patentable subject matter. As discussed in the more detail below, Claims 71, 72, 73 and 88 have been amended to be in independent form in order to place the application in condition for allowance. In amending the claims, the spelling of the word “characterising” has been corrected.

In response to paragraph 5 of the Office Action, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 9, 17, 121, 133, 136, 139 and 140 are dependent claims, as they refer to a previous claim.

Claim 143 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §101 for being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Without conceding the propriety of this rejection, Claim 143 has been cancelled. This rejection is therefore deemed to be moot.

Claims 70, 78-80, 87, 96-99, 104-106, 142 and 146 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being obvious over the Gouet article in view of McGuire ‘452. Without conceding the propriety of this rejection, Claim 70 has been cancelled and its subject matter added into Claims 71, 72 and 73, Claim 87 has been cancelled and its subject matter added into Claim 88 and Claims 96-99, 104-106, 142 and 146 have been cancelled. Accordingly, this rejection is deemed to be moot and should be withdrawn.

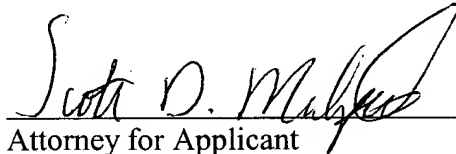
The amendments to the claims were not presented earlier as it was believed that the previously presented claims would be found allowable. This Amendment cancels claims without adding any additional claims. Moreover, the Examiner’s familiarity with the subject

matter of the present application will allow an appreciation of the significance of the amendments herein without undue expenditure of time and effort. Finally, the Amendment does not raise new issues requiring further consideration or search; rather, the claim have been amended to place the application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is believed that entry of the Amendment is appropriate.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of this application is deemed to be in order and such action is respectfully requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Scott D. Malpede", is written over a horizontal line.

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